AMSAT News Service Weekly Bulletins
Issue: ANS-057
Date: 2012-02-26
Sources: amsat-ans-2012-ans-057-weekly.txt

AMSAT NEWS SERVICE
ANS-057

ANS is a free, weekly, news and information service of AMSAT North America, The Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation. ANS reports on the activities of a worldwide group of Amateur Radio operators who share an active interest in designing, building, launching and communicating through analog and digital Amateur Radio satellites.

Please send any amateur satellite news or reports to:
ans-editor@amsat.org

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ANS-057 AMSAT News Service Weekly Bulletins

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 036.01
  From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
February 5, 2012
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-036.01

AMSAT Theme at Dayton 2012: Running with Fox

The 2012 Dayton Hamvention will be held this year on 18 - 20 May 2012. As has been the case for the many years Hamvention will be at the Hara Arena Complex on the north side of Dayton. AMSAT will occupy the same booths (444-449) in Ball Arena, right across from the ARRL area and just inside the door from the Satellite Demonstration area.

The AMSAT theme for 2012 is "Running with Fox". We will have multipe exhibits of the new AMSAT satellite on display.

Visit AMSAT's Dayton Hamvention page for all details on activities:
http://www.amsat.org/amsat-new/hamvention/2012/Dayton.php

Some of the activities will include:

+ Life size Fox models will be on display as well as diagrams of
   the modules inside the 10cm square satellite.

+ Operational prototype of ARISSat-1 on display.

+ AMSAT Thursday Night Get-together at the Tickets Pub & Eatery.

+ The sixth annual AMSAT/TAPR Banquet will be Friday night May 18

at the Kohler Banquet Center. The price for the Banquet is $30. Seating is limited and reservations are required. Follow the links on AMSAT's Dayton page.

+ The AMSAT Forum will be on Saturday May 19.

AMSAT has a limited block of rooms reserved at the Country Inn & Suites in Fairborn, OH. Please contact Martha at the AMSAT office for room price and availability during Hamvention. Priority for rooms will be given to those volunteering to work in the AMSAT booth for multiple 2 hour shifts during Hamvention. The hotel web page is: http://www.amsat.org/amsat-new/hamvention/2012/Hotel.php

The phone number for the AMSAT office is 301-589-6062. Other hotels in the immediate area of the Country inn & Suites include the Fairfield Inn, Ramada Inn, Hampton Inn, Fairborn Holiday Inn, Red Roof Inn and the Homewood Suites if additional accommodations are needed.

Further information on Hamvention 2012, including advance ticket sales and motel accommodations, can be found at http://www.hamvention.org.

ARISS School Events Now Number Over 700

ARISS Operation Team Mentor Charlie Sufana, AJ9N reports that the total number of ARISS ISS-to-Earth school events is now at 701. ARISS offers an opportunity for students to experience the excitement of Amateur Radio by talking directly with crewmembers on-board the International Space Station.

Teachers, parents and communities see, first hand, how Amateur Radio and crew members on ISS can energize youngsters' interest in science, technology, and learning.

ARISS is an international educational outreach program partnering the participating space agencies, NASA, Russian Space Agency, ESA, CNES, JAXA, and CSA, with the AMSAT and IARU organizations from participating countries. Further information on the ARISS program is available on the website http://www.ariss.org/ (graciously hosted by the Radio Amateurs of Canada).

The 700th school event was with The Academy@Shawnee City in Louisville, Kentucky via a telebridge contact with ON4ISS on February 14. ARISS says the special John Glenn event to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Perth, City of Lights was successful on February 20. This marked event number 701.

Planned school contacts for this coming week include:

+ ESA-ESTEC, Noordwijk, Netherlands, telebridge via IK1SLD. The schools that are involved are: American school of The Hague, International School of Amsterdam, and The British School in the Netherlands on Monday, February 27 at 12:45:29 UTC.

+ Parkside Elementary, Atlanta, GA, telebridge via K6DUE on Friday, March 3 at 16:42:29 UTC.

+ 5th Geniko Lykeio Katerinis, Katerini, Greece, direct via SX2ISS on Friday, March 3 at 17:03:52 UTC.

Each contact may have multiple schools sharing the same time slot.

A list of all of the ARISS School Events can be found at:
http://tinyurl.com/ARISS-Events

[ANS thanks ARISS Operation Team Mentor Charlie Sufana, AJ9N for
the above information]

ESA Reports Vega Cubesat Success

The ESA provided a summary of the success of the cubesats launched on the Vega mission on February 13. The web report said, "Shortly after the seven ESA student CubeSats started their adventure in space on board the Vega launcher yesterday, the university teams and radio amateurs all around the world pointed their 'ears' towards space and started to receive the first signs of life from the tiny spacecraft."

+ The Spanish XaTcobeo CubeSat was heard a couple of hours after launch (13 February 2012, 11:00 CET) during its first pass over the University of Vigo's ground station, and its signal was also tracked by many radio amateurs. The first data received show that the satellite's batteries are properly charged and that telemetry and telecommand systems work well, representing a very promising start for the mission.

+ The Hungarian team received the first signals from Masat-1 from a radio amateur in Florida less than two hours after launch, and by many others shortly after. A couple of hours later the team's ground station in Budapest gathered the first 'official' satellite data which confirmed that the spacecraft is in perfect shape.

+ PW-Sat, the Polish student CubeSat, was also heard loud and clear only a few hours after the launch. The signals have been heard both by the team's ground station and by several radio amateurs from the UK, India, Germany and the Netherlands.

+ The Italian UniCubeSat-GG team heard the first signals from the satellite, although they have not been decoded yet, shortly after launch, first from a Kentucky (US) ground station and then from the dedicated Rome ground station.

+ Initially weak signals were reported from the Italian e-st@r. On February 15 the e-st@r team reported signals from their CubeSat heard by their control ground station and other ham radio stations.

+ Weak signals have been received so far from the Romanian Goliat and the French Robusta CubeSats. These teams currently believe that their spacecraft may not have yet achieved a stable orient-ation after separation and sufficient battery charge level in order for their communication systems and antennas to transmit properly to the ground station. The situation will evolve in the course of the next several days, and further attempts to establish good communications links with those satellites will continue.

A joint effort from all CubeSat teams and radio amateurs from the AMSAT network has now started, in order to be able to clearly detect the satellites.

The full ESA report can be found on-line at:
http://www.esa.int/SPECIALS/Education/SEMR2ZYXHYG_0.html

[ANS thanks the ESA for the above information]

MASAT-1 (MO-72) Team Releases Software and Web Page Updates

The MASAT-1 team said this week that updated client software for telemetry reception and decoding is available on their web at: http://cubesat.bme.hu/en/radioamatoroknek/kliens-szoftver/

Some of the upgrades include:
+ The "Offline" label removed, the status of the automatic packet reporting is displayed.

+ Battery voltage constant (on the EPS panel) updated.

+ User selection between 626/1250 bps decoding.

+ The waterfall display shows tracks for the 0, CW and 1. The decoder has been reported to be most successful if tuning is set upward by 50-100 Hz from the tuning indicators. User experiences are invited to be sent to mezei@cubesat.bme.hu.

The automated received packet upload from the client software has been updated to accept ham@cubesat.bme.hu or a@a.a as mail address for those not wishing to send their actual address. Users can change the e-mail address by editing the registration.txt file in the program folder of the software package.

A statistics web page reporting on the numbers of packets forwarded by amateur radio operators has been added: http://cubesat.bme.hu/en/radioamatoroknek/veteli-statisztika/ The site has successfully received over 50000 packets from around the world. The latest updates to the web and client software should address initial concerns that 'no packets' have been received.

The MASAT-1 team thanks amateur radio operators for your outstanding support. The MASAT-1 Important News for Radio Amateurs page is at: http://cubesat.bme.hu/en/2012/02/19/fontos-hirek-radioamatoroknek/

The MASAT-1 mission home page is: http://cubesat.bme.hu

[ANS thanks the MASAT-1 Team for the above information]

Dedicated CubeSat Radio Spectrum Discussed at WRC-12

AMSAT-UK reports on their web that the recently concluded WRC-12 conference agreed to a resolution by the SmallSat, CubeSat, and NanoSatellite community for dedicated spectrum allocation outside of the 435 to 437 MHz amateur satellite band.

Wouter Jan Ubbels, PE4WJ with the Dutch space development company ISIS says he was able to introduce a resolution at WRC-12 submitted by a number of countries, led by the Netherlands to propose an agenda item for WRC-2015 to conduct studies to identify the spectrum needs of nano-and picosatellites, and furthermore to study the associated regulatory constraints.

After the discussions at WRC-12, the resolution received partial

acceptance to begin study of the regulatory aspects for WRC-2018.

Wouter concluded, "This is very good news, and could mean that the ITU notification process for nano-and picosatellites can become greatly simplified in the future. We first of all would like to thank all the supporting administrations for their support and would like to invite the community to, through their administrations, participate in the studies, so that the outcome will be as much as possible line with the needs of the community. We will continue to work on this subject and keep you updated through these lists and at the various small / nano / picosatellite conferences and work-shops."

The full news item can be viewed on the AMSAT-UK web at:
http://www.uk.amsat.org/4950

[ANS thanks Wouter Jan Ubbels, PE4WJ and AMSAT-UK for the above information]

Arizona Centennial Event K7UGA Station Reports 122 Satellite QSOs

Arizona AMSAT Area Coordinator, Patrick Stoddard, WD9EWK/VA7EWK and Tom Kramer, NQ7R provided the satellite contacts for the K7UGA spec-ial-event station. K7UGA was sponsored by the Central Arizona DX Association in its commemoration of the Arizona statehood centennial.

Patrick reported, "Between Tom NQ7R and myself, we made 122 satellite contacts. Tom worked his passes from his home in Casa Grande AZ (grid DM42). For passes I worked at the start of the week through Thursday afternoon, I operated from DM43 in the Phoenix area. For the passes I worked Friday and Saturday, I was at the Yuma Hamfest. On Sunday morn-ing, I parked next to the Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park overlooking the Colorado River. Both Yuma sites are in grid DM22."

Patrick posted videos of his K7UGA operation:

+ SO-50 pass on Friday (17 February) morning at 1751 UTC:
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKaIKgjuSMM

+ AO-27 pass on Friday afternoon at 2032 UTC:
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIA_VANTdpQ

+ AO-27 pass on Saturday (18 February) afternoon at 2004 UTC:
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YiXTjgD5nD8

+ VO-52 pass on Sunday (19 February) morning at 1538 UTC:
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0AAB3A7Xy4

The K7UGA page on QRZ.com states that all QSL card requests be sent with SASE to: K7BHM, 1623 N. Los Altos Ct., Chandler, AZ 85224-8357.

[ANS thanks Arizona AMSAT Area Coordinator, Patrick Stoddard, WD9EWK/VA7EWK for the above information]

AA5UK Announces Plans for Hawaii Satellite Operation

Adrian Engele, AA5UK says he will be traveling to Hawaii between March 21 and April 4. This is primarily a vacation trip for sight-seeing and scuba diving but satellite operation is also planned.

He will try to get on the satellites as often as his schedule permits within vacation activities. His primary focus will be on FO-29, VO-52 and AO-7 Mode B passes. SO-50 and AO-27 may be attempted if conditions permit.

+ March 21 - Fly from Chicago to Honolulu and Hilo.
+ March 22-25 - Operation from south of Hilo.
+ March 26 - April 1 - Kailua-Kona, Big Island in Hawaii.
+ April 2 - April 4: Oahu, Waikiki beach.

Adrian invites you to stay tuned via AMSAT-BB and his Twitter feed @AA5UK for latest schedule information. He will also update his page on QRZ.com in the coming weeks with additional information.

[ANS thanks Adrian Engele, AA5UK for the above information]

Satellite DX: XF1AA on Isabel Island

The OPDX Bulletin 1050 is reporting that a team of 10 operators, from the Aguas-Calientes Amateur Radio Club will activate Isabel Island, grid DL71, using the callsign XF1AA. The planned dates are March 16th through the 21st.

Ismael, XE1AY, is one of the operators and is active on the satel-lites. If you should hear Ismael on the birds, please give him the airtime to work as many as he can. Good luck with the operation!

[ANS thanks John Papay, K8YSE for the above information]

Volunteers Needed for AMSAT at Timonium, MD on March 31

Pat Kilroy, N8PK says that volunteers are needed to staff the AMSAT display and for satellite operating demonstrations at the Greater Baltimore Hamboree and Computerfest on Saturday, March 31 in Timonium, Maryland. This event is one of the largest Amateur Radio and technology shows on the East Coast.

In addition to the AMSAT display and satellite demonstrations Pat is planning to show the FUNcube Dongle and present show'n'tell talks for visitors to the AMSAT booth.

Please contact Pat soon by e-mail (pat@patkilroy.com) if you can help!

For more info about the hamfest visit: http://www.gbhc.org/

[ANS thanks Pat Kilroy, N8PK for the above information

ARISS Status Report - 20 February 2012

1. Kochi Youth Radio ISS Astronaut

Kochi Gakuen Kochi Junior High School in Kochi, Japan experienced a successful Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) contact on Monday, February 13. Students asked Dan Burbank, KC5ZSX, 11 questions about living in space. The contact was integrated into the science curriculum. Media coverage included three television stations and three newspapers.

2. Astronaut Dan Burbank Speaks with Louisville Students

On Tuesday, February 14, youth attending The Academy @ Shawnee participated in an Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) contact with on-orbit astronaut Dan Burbank, KC5ZSX via telebridge station ON4ISS in Belgium. The contact took place at the Challenger Learning Center in Louisville, Kentucky with the assistance of the Louisville Astronomical Society. Approximately 40 people were in attendance and listened as Burbank chatted with students about experiments on board the ISS and the effect space has on the human body, among other topics. The Academy, an inner city high school of 500 students, has been designated as the Aerospace Magnet School for Jefferson County Public Schools. The contact was part of a comprehensive education plan to pique students' interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

3. Astronaut Training Status

Astronaut Alexander Gerst passed his amateur radio license exam on February 13 and is waiting for his callsign to be assigned. He is scheduled to fly with Expedition 40 in May 2014.

An introductory session is planned for Gregory Wiseman, KF5LKT (Expedition 40, May 2014) on Monday, February 27 and a preflight session is scheduled for Expedition 32 astronauts Sunita Williams, KD5PLB and Akihiko Hoshide, KE5DNI on Monday, March 5. Williams and Hoshide will fly later this year.

[ANS thanks Carol, KB3LKI, for the above information]

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In addition to regular membership, AMSAT offers membership in the President's Club. Members of the President's Club, as sustaining donors to AMSAT Project Funds, will be eligible to receive additional benefits. Application forms are available from the AMSAT Office.

73,
This week's ANS Editor,
Lee McLamb, KU4OS